

Business Incubators and the City of Ramsey

Preliminary Insights

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Purpose

Perform preliminary research on business incubators for the City of Ramsey

- What business development services currently exist for Ramsey businesses?
- What role can business incubators play in business development?

Additional research

- Alternatives to business incubators
- List of business incubators in Minnesota

Out of scope: recommending a business incubator strategy for the City of Ramsey

Background on Ramsey

Assets

- Northstar stop, Highway 10, housing diversity, manufacturing industry, pro economic development, Mississippi and Rum Rivers



Challenges

- Third ring suburb, competition with more developed suburbs, limited retail and restaurant options



Existing Business Services

From the City of Ramsey

- Business retention and expansion programs: business visits, events
- Marketing and financing packages for new development

Beyond the City of Ramsey

- Local and State Chamber of Commerce
- Anoka Technical College (STEP Program)
- Industry Support Groups
- Entrepreneurship Initiatives (1 Million Cups)
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development & SBA
 - Finance and Workforce Development Programs
 - Export led trade programs.

Business Incubators Defined

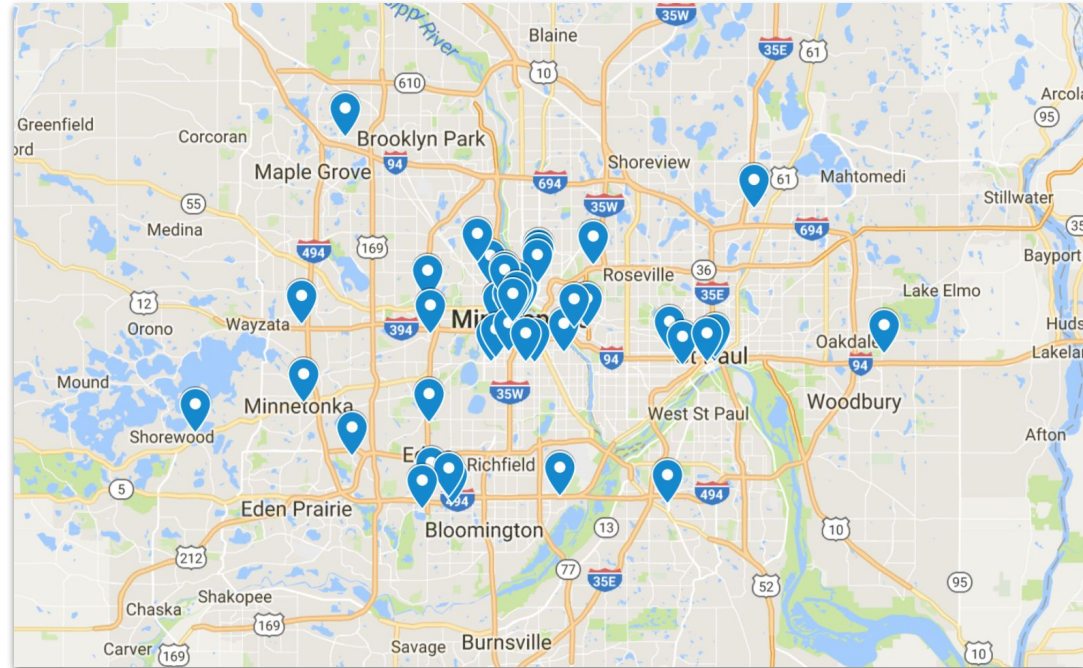
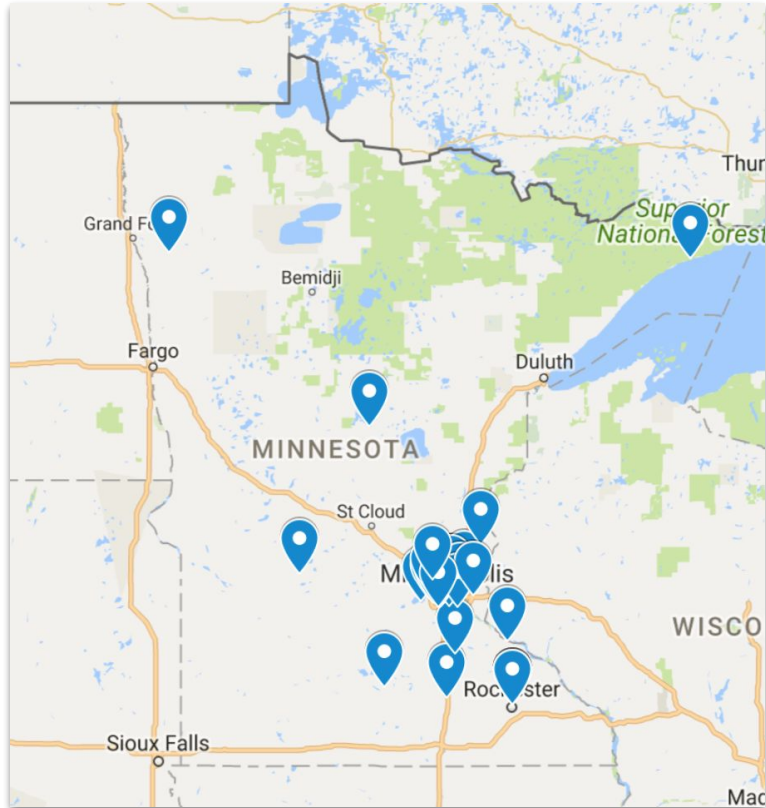
Most basic definition:

A business incubator is an organization or program that helps develop new or small businesses.

Potential services provided:

- Communal working space, specialized equipment, expertise, mentoring, apprenticeships, funding, programming, events, and more

Business Incubators in Minnesota



Nonprofit Business Incubator

- Stand alone
- Grant funded
- IncubatorWorks, Corning, NY
 - Promotes economic development in region
 - Serves low technology to high technology
 - Part of large network
- Micatu
- Ramsey
 - Encourages regional economic growth
 - Less overall financing



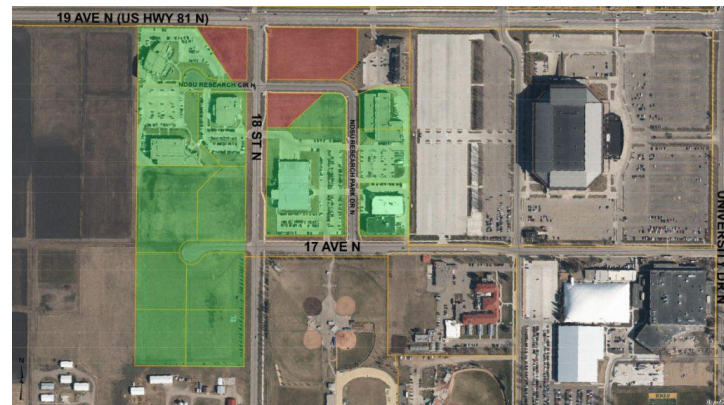
Manufacturing Business Incubator

- Manufacturing Centered
 - Warehouse/Manufacturing Space, Managerial Support, Technical Assistance, and Access to Financial Program
- Transitional Stage
 - New to established business
 - Discounted space
 - Access to business assistance and technical networks
 - Phase out period
- Partnership Focused
 - UW-Eau Claire Center Business Solutions, UW-Stout Discover Center, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC)
- Chippewa Valley Innovation Center
 - 501(c)3 organization managed by Eau Claire Area Economic Development Corporation



Specialized Business Incubators

- North Dakota State University Research and Technology Park, Fargo, ND
 - Workspaces for companies that are working in STEM fields and companies that support this field.
- Services & Features
 - Office support, wet lab/dry lab space, manufacturing space, 24 acres open land
- Appareo
- Ramsey
 - No sizeable STEM presence, refocus to fit proper industries



<https://www.ndsuresearchpark.com/available-space/open-land/>

Coworking Space

- The Commons Workspace in Excelsior, MN
- Privately owned and run
- Catered to professional work
 - Entrepreneurs and small companies
 - Remote employees
- Offers various membership levels
- High retention due to suburban location
- Potential for targeting and additional support/services



Alternatives to Business Incubators

- Culinary workforce pipeline
- Craft district
- Artist work space
- Public markets



https://cdn.vox-cdn.com/uploads/chorus_image/image/52724711/Grassroots_Gourmet_cr_MGM_FB.0.0.jpg



Recommendations

Strategic Planning

- Create a task force or committee responsible for exploring the business incubator idea
- Identify the problem the city is trying to solve and identify other possible ways to solve the problem.
- Determine high-level goals for a business incubator in the city
- Consider the role that Ramsey would play in a business incubator
- Engage with city and area residents, businesses, and entrepreneurs

Recommendations

Additional research

- Determine potential barriers to achieving goals and ways to combat them
- Identify potential partners and the roles they could play
- Research the needs and gaps for existing businesses and residents
- Perform a market analysis of commercial space in Ramsey
 - Is it a barrier for establishing new businesses?
- Perform a workforce analysis
- Draft sample budgets for feasibility analyses
- Holistic integration into the business community; commercial space, workforce component, event space, networking events, etc.

Questions?